DC #11

DIRECT CURRENTS

BOOKS SHIPPING DEC 6 THRU DEC 20

IN THIS ISSUE:

THE CATWOMAN
4-issue mini-series

THE GREATEST JOKER STORIES EVER TOLD
Hardcover

PLUS...
An interview with Denny O'Neil

Cover Of The Month
SUPERMAN #28

THE GREATEST JOKER STORIES EVER TOLD ... IT'S NO LAUGHING MATTER

He's known as the Clown Prince of Crime . . . but there's nothing very funny about THE JOKER.

Now THE JOKER'S weirdest, most maniacal episodes are represented in **THE GREATEST JOKER STORIES EVER TOLD** the 288-page hardcover companion volume to last month's GREATEST BATMAN STORIES EVER TOLD.

Included in this fabulous hardcover collection are THE JOKER'S first two appearances from the pages of BATMAN #1 in 1940, along with 17 more classic tales spanning the last five decades of his battles against the Darknight Detective. But it's not only THE JOKER'S greatest stories that are told . . . you'll also be getting stories drawn by a host of the finest Batman artists ever to put pencil and brush to paper, including Neal Adams, Murphy Anderson, Jim Aparo, Carmine Infantino, Bob Kane, Marshall Rogers, Walter Simonson, Dick Sprang, and others.

All the stories in THE GREATEST JOKER STORIES EVER TOLD have been recolored to take advantage of the book's superior reproduction and the entire volume is wrapped in a painted cover by Kyle Baker.

THE JOKER . . . for almost 50 years, he's been the bane of The Batman's existence.

And now the evolution of this classic adversarial relationship is told here . . . in THE GREATEST JOKER STORIES EVER TOLD.

THE NINE LIVES OF *THE CATWOMAN*

Her story began in the pages of Frank Miller and David Mazzucchelli's instant classic, BATMAN: YEAR ONE . . . and now it continues here, in **THE CATWOMAN** mini-series.

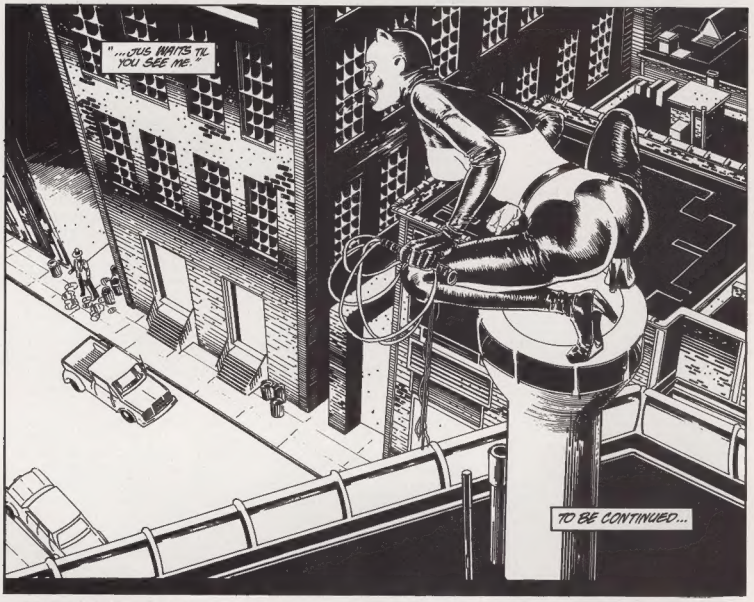
When young Selina Kyle is assaulted by a criminal associate, she learns how to defend herself. And, she learns that murder comes easy to her.

She learns that she is destined to be THE CATWOMAN.

The events that reshaped the life of Selina Kyle and her criminal alter ego THE CATWOMAN are told here in shocking detail by writer Mindy Newell and artists J.J. Birch and Michael Bair. THE CATWOMAN is a four-issue New Format mini-series, a no-holds-barred story suggested for mature readers.

THE CATWOMAN.

Hers is without doubt *not* a story for the squeamish.



Paul Kupperberg, Writer
Peggy May, Editor
Julia Sabbagh, Designer

DIRECT CURRENTS No. 11, November 1988. Published by DC COMICS INC., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10103. Copyright © 1988 by DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters, and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. Except as otherwise noted, all titles, characters, and related indicia are Trademarks of DC Comics Inc. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred. ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, DRAGONLANCE, and GAMMARAIDERS are trademarks owned by & licensed from TSR Inc. © 1988 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved. THE PRISONER is a trademark of ITC Entertainment Inc. © 1988. All Rights Reserved. COPS © 1988 Hasbro, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Used under license by DC Comics Inc. THE SHADOW and DOC SAVAGE Copyright © 1988 by Conde Nast Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters and the distinctive likenesses of THE SHADOW and DOC SAVAGE are Trademarks of Conde Nast Publications, Inc. Printed in Canada

FROM • THE EDITOR

We have one of those ironic situations here. You see, the more feature stories that appear in DIRECT CURRENTS, the less room there is to print your letters. (And there have been *tons* of letters, from all over the world, as this letter column clearly indicates. In fact, Tammy Brown, who assists me in many of my tasks here at the DC offices, has given up weight lifting, since carrying in the mail for DIRECT CURRENTS fills that task admirably.) This month, with a Christmas "skip" week and with first issues slowing down just a little, I've been lucky enough to have this whole page for running letters. I wish there were this much room every month. But, well, onward . . .

Dear Peggy,

My name is ARVIND SURI and I am a DC fan. The last two years of DC Comics are not available here regularly. Prestige Format, New Format, and Deluxe Format books are *not at all* available here.

I want to get the comics from the U.S.A., Canada, or the U.K., but I cannot buy comics from the specialty stores from the above mentioned countries because I cannot send foreign currency. The reason is that there are strict restrictions on sending the foreign exchange out of India. But I am ready to send Indian Handicrafts of equal value in exchange for DC Comics I want.

Peggy, you must be meeting many people, and I am sure some of them may agree to this type of exchange. Therefore I appeal to you to ask about this. I would be happy to start this exchange.

Sincerely,
Arvind
E-422
Greater Kailash II
New Delhi 110048
INDIA

Dear Arvind:

Thank you for your kind words and interest. Unfortunately, I think that the Warner Communications tax lawyers wouldn't accept an Indian shawl as payment for comics that we send. But I hope that by printing your letter here in DIRECT CURRENTS, someone will get in touch with you and set up the kind of trade you're looking for. I'm glad that you enjoy DC Comics so much—and thanks for writing in.

Dear Ms. May,

Question: Is it possible to order publicity posters, pins, and what not directly from you? I'm referring specifically to the "smiley" WATCHMEN pins and the V FOR VENDETTA publicity posters. Any info on a source of such items would be greatly appreciated.

Yours truly,
Jeff The
2125 St. Reges
Jonquiere, Quebec
CANADA G7S 2W4

Dear Jeff:

You're actually asking two separate questions. The WATCHMEN pins were available in specialty stores—for sale—during the early issues of the WATCHMEN series. Unfortunately, if you didn't pick one up when they first came out, you're probably not going to get one. It's always a good idea to pick up these special retail items when they're first available. (No, I'm not just saying that to get you to buy stuff. When DC Comics puts a retail product, as we call them, into the specialty stores, it's almost always on a one-time-only basis. If you miss out on them when they're first available, you'll have trouble finding them later—and when you *do* find them, the price may be quite high. (That's the price for being in a market for collectibles—we sell them at one price when the item is offered. But a retail store owner may receive ten, twenty, even a hundred times the price later on if the item becomes rare and is much in demand.) Don't miss the Flash cloisonné pin, which is scheduled to be in stores in February.

Your second question relates to the publicity posters, or promotional posters as we call them. Those are not offered for sale at all. We ship those out to our distributors free of charge, and the distributors send them to the stores that you shop in. We ask the stores to use the posters as a display. If there's one that you really like, perhaps you could ask your store owner if he/she would let you have it when he/she takes it off display. We know that some stores sell those promotional posters—there's not much we can do about that because, again, this is a market for collectibles and we can't monitor that kind of thing—but we do not sell those or make them available directly to readers. Sometimes, we send some posters for giveaway at local conventions, so you might try that route—but no guarantees there, either.

Dear Peggy,

I would like to know what decides if a book should be cancelled or not. Like for instance INFINITY, INC., which I felt was one of the best titles . . .

Sincerely,
Craig Matsuda
655 Kaekeeke Way
Honolulu, HI 96821

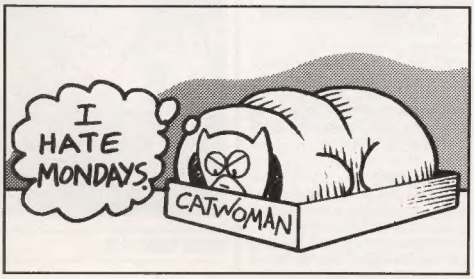
Dear Craig:

Each decision is different—there's no *one* reason for cancelling a title. Sometimes, the sales of a title don't justify continuing to publish, but even *that* is never a simple decision. (We *do* continue to publish some titles that we lose money on, at least for a period of time.) Sometimes, the creative folks working on a title feel that they've said all that they want to say. Sometimes, as with titles that we license from other companies, our licensing agreements run out and we no longer have the legal right to publish. The best thing you can do to keep a title available is to buy it. Writing in to tell us that you like it is great, but I always like to tell people that your strongest vote is your wallet. If everyone who likes a book buys a copy, it's more likely to continue to be published.

Thanks to everyone who has written in to me at DIRECT CURRENTS. Your enthusiasm for the DC comics and for DIRECT CURRENTS has really been overwhelming. Most of you are taking the time to tell me how much you enjoy the "People at Work" section, particularly. What else would you like to read about? What other questions do you have about DC Comics in general? I always wanted to know what those color blocks are at the top of the newsprint comics—and whether Silly Putty still picks up the images of the paper . . .

See ya,

Peggy



BOOKS SHIPPING DECEMBER 6

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #636

It's all-out action as Dick Giordano provides this week's cover featuring the new Action line-up, including The Demon by Alan Grant, Mark Pacella, and Bill Wray; Speedy by Mark Verheiden, Louis Williams, and Frank McLaughlin; Blackhawk by Martin Pasko and Rick Burchett; Wild Dog by Max Allan Collins and Terry Beatty; Phantom Lady by Len Strazewski and Chuck Austen; and Superman by Roger Stern, Curt Swan, and Murphy Anderson.

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ #2

What is the price for the cure for the paladin's withered arms? A dwarf metalsmith holds the answer . . . which may include the paladin's life. Written by Michael Fleisher, with art and cover by Jan Duursema. *(New Format)*

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ #2

BLACK ORCHID #2

(of a 3-book mini-series)

While a lone man closes in on the Black Orchid's trail, the mysterious heroine's past continues to come to light, aided by the inmates of Arkham Asylum. Written by Neil Gaiman, with full painted art and cover by Dave McKean. *(Prestige Format)*

CAPTAIN ATOM #25

The Invasion is over and Captain Atom is hailed by the world as a war hero, but now all the exhausted atomic hero wants is to be left alone, so he travels to New York incognito to duck the press. But reporters may be all he manages to dodge. Written by Cary Bates, with art and cover by Pat Broderick and Bob Smith. *(An INVASION! Aftermath Extra)*

COPS #8

Part II of Rogue Cop. The Tramplutz is after Big Dass and his gang, so they decide the best place to hide is in the 47th Precinct—C.O.P.S.' own H.Q.! Written by Doug Moench, with art and cover by Pat Broderick and Pablo Marcos.

COPS #8

DETECTIVE COMICS #596

The filming of movies is a common sight in just about every major city and Gotham is no exception . . . except the films being shot there are movies of death and The Batman may be their next star. Written by John Wagner and Alan Grant, with art and cover by Norm Breyfogle.

DOCTOR FATE #3

Talk about a reversal of roles . . . with Andrew Bennett (of I, Vampire fame) working alongside the Lords of Order to bring about the destruction of the universe, Doctor Fate is forced to forge an alliance with the Lords of Chaos. Written by J.M. DeMatteis, with art by Shawn McManus and Mark McKenna. Cover by McManus. *(New Format)*

THE GREATEST JOKER STORIES EVER TOLD

A spectacular 288-page hardcover collection featuring 19 classic confrontations between The Batman and his arch-nemesis, The Joker, including stories by Neal Adams, Bob Kane, Marshall Rogers, Walter Simonson, Dick Sprang, and others. All-new cover by Kyle Baker.

INVASION! #3

(of a 3-issue mini-series)

The heroes and citizens of Earth think the invasion is over and victory is theirs . . . until the aliens explode a deadly para-gene bomb over the planet that will forever change the lives of the super-heroes of the DC Universe. Written by Keith Giffen and Bill Mantlo, pencilled by Bart Sears, and inked by P. Craig Russell, Al Gordon, and Joe Rubinstein.

THE NEW GUARDIANS #7

The aftermath of INVASION! is a time of mourning for the New Guardians as they bury their dead and ponder their individual pasts. But trips down memory lane can be treacherous paths. Written by Cary Bates, with art and cover by Joe Staton and Mark Farmer. *(New Format)*

THE QUESTION #25

Myra hovers between life and death . . . and the Question also finds himself in a life-and-death situation as he faces an old Batman foe who offers him his most *puzzling* challenge ever. Written by Denny O'Neil, with art by Denys Cowan and Malcolm Jones III. Cover by Cowan and Bill Sienkiewicz. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. Deluxe Format)*

THE SPECTRE #24

While Earth's heroes have been struck down by the aliens' para-gene bomb, a single man possessing the gene survives and is kidnapped by a mysterious organization seeking to use him for their own ends . . . until Jim Corrigan and associates are hired to find him. And Spectre is commissioned to destroy him. Part 1 of a 6-part mini-series-within-a-series. Written by Doug Moench, with art and cover by Tom Artis. *(New Format)*

SUICIDE SQUAD #23

The Squad is split up, with half of them in the U.S.S.R. and the rest in Australia . . . telling tales of invasions and other problems! Written by John Ostrander, with art and cover by Luke McDonnell and Karl Kesel.

SUICIDE SQUAD #23

THE WANDERERS #10
Superstardom awaits Quantum Queen if she'll only sign up with a 30th-century huckster . . . or does this so-called promoter have other motives? Written by Doug Moench, with art by Dave Hoover and Robert Campanella. Cover by Steve Lightle. *(New Format)*

WASTELAND #16
The weirdness of the Wasteland continues, courtesy of writers John Ostrander and Del Close and artists Don Simpson, Michael Davis, and Bill Wray. Cover by Rick Magyar. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. Deluxe Format)*

BOOKS SHIPPING DECEMBER 13

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #637
Jerome Moore's rendition of Speedy graces this week's cover as his adventures continue inside. Debuting is Hero Hotline by Bob Rozakis, Stephen DeStefano, and Kurt Schaffenberger. Also featured are Phantom Lady, The Demon, Wild Dog, and Superman.

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #637

CHECKMATE #13
Divorced dad Harry Stein tries to get away for a vacation with his kids, but when your job is heading up Checkmate, it's not easy to get away from work even when you're not in the office. Written by Paul Kupperberg, with art by Steve Erwin and Al Vey. Cover by Art Thibert. *(New Format)*

DOC SAVAGE #6
With the Erisian menace looming over the entire world, Doc attempts to forge an alliance between the U.S., the Soviet Union, and China to combat it . . . but it's a fragile alliance at best. Written by Denny O'Neil, with art by Rod Whigham and Steve Montano. Cover by Adam Kubert and Andy Kubert. *(Deluxe Format)*

DOC SAVAGE #6

FIRESTORM THE NUCLEAR MAN #82
The Invasion may be over, but its aftermath lingers on . . . especially for Firestorm, who's left to deal with the trauma from accidentally killing innocents while doing battle with the aliens. Written by John Ostrander, with art by Tom Grindberg and Sam De La Rosa. Cover by Grindberg.

FLASH #23
Flash is faced with the return of the Clipper . . . or maybe not. Only Mason Trollbridge knows for sure, and he's not telling. Written by William Messner-Loebs, with art by guest penciller Gordon Purcell and Larry Mahlstedt.

JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL #24
A special triple-sized second anniversary issue, featuring three stories. First up, Maxwell Lord confronts his past and his future—revealing a secret even he didn't know in a story written by Keith Giffen and J.M. DeMatteis, with art by Ty Templeton and Joe Rubinstein. Then, meet the cast of an all-new Justice League team, Justice League Europe (which will debut in two months in its own title), written by Giffen and DeMatteis, with art by Kevin Maguire and Rubinstein. Plus, DC Bonus Book #13, as Max is kidnapped by terrorists . . . and the JLI say he's on his own, in a story by David Levin and penciller Dean Haspiel. Cover by Maguire and Rubinstein.

MANHUNTER #10
The defeated aliens have left behind a lot of hardware which Manhunter and a salvage company race to lay claim to. Written by John Ostrander and Kim Yale, with art by Doug Rice and Pablo Marcos. Cover by Rice.

V FOR VENDETTA #8
(of a 10-issue maxi-series)
The all-new material begins as the story of V races toward its conclusion. V bombs the monitoring system, allowing the voice of the people to be heard for the first time in years. Written by Alan Moore, with art and painted cover by David Lloyd. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. Deluxe Format)*

WONDER WOMAN #27
Diana's still searching for her missing magic lasso when the Cheetah returns . . . with the lasso in her possession. Written by George Pérez, with art by Chris Marrinan and Willie Blyberg. Cover by Pérez.

YOUNG ALL-STARS #23
Part 3 of the 5-part "Atom and Evil" saga. Four new heroes race to prevent Axis Amerika from capturing Allied scientists. Introducing The Squire, Phantasmo, Fireball, and Kuei the Man-Demon. Written by Roy and Dann Thomas, with art and cover by Ron Harris and Bob Downs. *(New Format)*

BOOKS SHIPPING DECEMBER 20

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #638
Jack Kirby and Terry Austin provide this week's cover featuring Kirby's creation The Demon. Inside you'll find the continuing adventures of Phantom Lady, Hero Hotline, Speedy, Wild Dog, and Superman.

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #638

THE BATMAN #430
High above the streets of Gotham, the Darknight Detective must face not only a madman but a horrifying truth from his own past as well. Written by Jim Starlin, with art by Jim Aparo and Mike DeCarlo.

THE BATMAN #430

CATWOMAN #1
(of a 4-issue mini-series)
Young Selina Kyle is assaulted by a criminal associate . . . an act that teaches her how to defend herself and leads to her becoming the Catwoman. Written by Mindy Newell, with art by J.J. Birch and Michael Bair. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format)*

DRAGONLANCE™ #5
An unsuspecting mind becomes the recipient of a seed of evil . . . a seed that may help Raistlin defeat the Queen of Darkness. Written by Dan Mishkin, with art by Mike Collins and R. Elliott *(New Format)*

DRAGONLANCE™ #5

GREEN ARROW #15
Things seem to be going Green Arrow's way as he's reunited with Dinah and gains the upper hand in his battle with the government. Written by Mike Grell, with art and cover by Ed Hannigan and Dick Giordano. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format)*

HAYWIRE #7
A sequel to the "Black Dragon" storyline from HAYWIRE #2. The Brotherhood demands revenge for their fallen comrade. And Haywire finds himself up against the deadly "White Lotus." Written by Michael Fleisher, with art by Vince Giarrano and Jose Marzan. Cover by Giarrano. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format)*

HELLBLAZER #16
Part 3 of the 12-part "Fear Machine" cycle. Constantine begins to unravel the conspiracy that lies behind the Fear Machine. Written by Jamie Delano, with art by Richard Piers Rayner and Mark Buckingham. Painted cover by Dave McKean. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format)*

THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #57
What starts out as a simple crime on Earth turns into something far bigger and more important than anyone suspected. Meanwhile, Sun Boy takes over as the Legion's chief scientist . . . or at least he tries. Written by Paul Levitz, with art by Keith Giffen and Al Gordon. Cover by Steve Lightle. *(Deluxe Format)*

MISTER MIRACLE #2
Mister Miracle is trapped in Doctor Bedlam's dream dimension and the world's greatest escape artist may at last be faced with a trap even he can't escape from. Written by J.M. DeMatteis, with art and cover by Ian Gibson.

PLASTIC MAN #4
(of a 4-issue mini-series)
Bag people. Aliens. Flying saucers. Central Park. This one's got it all . . . including Plas and Woozy. What more do you need to wrap up the Stretchable Sleuth's mini-series? Script by Phil Foglio, with art by Hilary Barta and John Nyberg and kibitzing by Doug Rice. Cover by Barta.

SECRET ORIGINS #37
The Legion of Substitute Heroes takes the spotlight as the secret origin of the 30th century's biggest losers is retold, written by Ty Templeton and drawn by Templeton and Anthony Van Bruggen. Also, the origin of a 20th century loser, the original Doctor Light, as told by Craig Boldman and penciller Mike Parobeck. Cover by Templeton.

SUPERMAN #28
While Luthor and Brainiac fight for control of Metropolis and the ex-Supergirl struggles to learn to live as a normal human, Superman transports himself out of our universe . . . and straight into trouble. Written by Roger Stern, with art and cover by Kerry Gammill and Dennis Janke.

people at WORK

DENNY O'NEIL

If there's such a thing as a super-star in this business, Denny O'Neil surely fits into the category. His work in the field spans three decades and includes some of the most creative work in comics, from The Batman and the innovative Green Lantern/Green Arrow of the early 1970's, to his current stint on The Question, a comic that's considered a must read by most of Denny's peers.

Denny was born May 3, 1939 in St. Louis, Missouri, and, like most people who find their way into the field, comics figured in his life early on. "We read them on stone tablets," Denny says with a laugh. "I started reading comics at about four years old and I suspect I learned to read from them because they were a lot more interesting than 'Dick and Jane.' I remember my father would buy me one comic book a week, after Sunday Mass, but kids had a way of stretching that 10¢ a week investment back then by trading comics. Every few weeks, I'd load them up on a little red wagon and go up and down the block and trade with the other kids who read comics."

Along with an early interest in comics came Denny's interest in the written word. "I guess it was when I was in the fourth grade, there was a Superman/Tim Club sponsored by a local department store. It cost something like 15¢ to join, and for that you got a newsletter about Superman and his made-up friend, Tim, and they would hold all sorts of contests. I won one of the short story contests . . . I wonder if that didn't doom me to a life of comic book writing."

Denny attended a military high school, followed by four years at a Jesuit university. "I was an English major, with minors in creative writing and philosophy. I suppose the best thing I got out of that was from a creative writing teacher who insisted on our writing a thousand words a week, which at least taught me to respect deadlines and that I could get the work done. I was also briefly involved with the college literary magazine, and I wrote a sketch for a college show. Still, when I left college, I thought I would never write another word of fiction in my life."

Part of the reason for that belief had to do with his brief foray into another creative realm. "I fooled around with acting, doing a few professional things. For a time, it was a toss-up as to which way it would go. I liked acting and writing about equally, but I found out I didn't like the life style that came with a career in the theater.

"So I eventually chose writing. I thought I'd probably be a journalist of some sort. I did some of that when I was in the navy, and when I got out I taught in the St. Louis public school system for about a year. After that, I worked for a small daily newspaper in Missouri. You know, it was your typical 'I don't know what I want to do, what's the world all about' young person kind of thing."

But the newspaper job eventually led Denny to his career in comics. "In the early '60s, I was doing a series of stories for the youth

page on the resurgence of comic books, and I interviewed Roy Thomas, who was publishing Alter Ego, one of the first, and to my mind, still the best, of the comic book fanzines. Roy had already gotten a job at DC, and then went to work for Stan Lee at Marvel.

"After the article was published, Roy sent me the Marvel writing test and I took it, mostly as a lark, and on the basis of the test, Stan offered me a job. Well, I had some personal reasons for wanting to move to the East Coast, so I mounted a steed—an old Ford station wagon—left a note for my editor, and took off for New York. It was the most irresponsible thing I ever did. I was on three major beats on the paper, and if I had been that editor, I would have tracked me down and killed me.

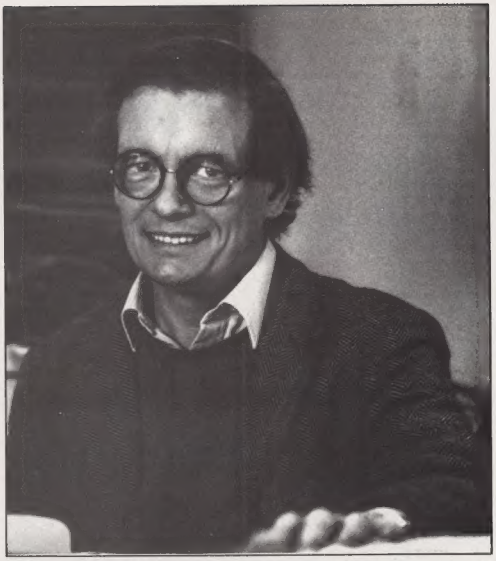
"I worked on staff at Marvel for about six months before I went freelance, writing DOCTOR STRANGE, MILLIE THE MODEL, and PATSY AND HEDY, and probably some westerns. Stan would write the super-heroes and the rest of us gradually took over on that stuff. It was a good way to learn the trade because if we fell on our face, nobody really noticed.

"At the same time, I heard that a guy named Dick Giordano was buying stories for Charlton Comics, so I went to see him. We agreed to a few assignments, but I was also doing some magazine writing at the time, so I took the pen name Sergius O'Shaunessey because I didn't think the editors of these magazines would be thrilled by my association with comics. It's a lot different these days. The name, by the way, comes from a character in Norman Mailer's *Deer Park*, which I saw the night I was trying to come up with a pen name. I subsequently met Mailer, but I didn't mention my appropriating one of his characters."

"Sergius" remained with Charlton until Dick went over to DC Comics, taking Denny, along with a host of other Charlton creators, with him. "My first assignments were CREEPER, BOMBA THE JUNGLE BOY, and the western comic BAT LASH, a series that even then I thought was ahead of its time.

"Then I was introduced to Julie Schwartz," Denny says, smiling. "I don't think he was too hip on using this hippie. Everybody else used to show up at DC in a suit and tie; I wore tie-dye and jeans and had long hair, very '60s looking. But I did a GREEN LANTERN script for Julie, which he liked despite my appearance, which led to other assignments like HAWKMAN, the ATOM, and JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA, among others." It was no doubt that Denny's then-hippie appearance landed him the assignment he's best remembered for from that period, the so-called "relevant" run of GREEN LANTERN/GREEN ARROW with artist Neal Adams.

And then came The Batman. "As I recall, they came to me and said the TV version of the character was dead, and asked if I had any ideas on how to revamp him. The idea we had was to return to what Batman had once been, to go back and find out what had made the character popular in the first place, rediscover his essence. I had always seen Batman as very grim, a loner, operating on the fringe of society and reality. I think it was by the luck of the draw that Neal got to draw that first ("Secret of the Waiting Graves"). After that, I started doing the character on a regular basis. Someone once counted up that I've done something like 86 Batman stories."



It was during this time that one of the Darknight Detective's greatest foes was introduced. "We decided to create a major new Batman villain because there hadn't been a new one in a long time. Usually characters come out of a need for a single, specific story, but not this time, and from that came Ra's al Ghul and Talia. The basic idea was mine, the visual entirely Neal's, and the name from Julie (the name, by the way, means "demon star" in Arabic)."

After a long and illustrious run at DC, Denny switched back over to Marvel. "I wanted a change of pace, feeling I'd become typecast at DC. It had gotten too easy, so I felt the need to challenge myself. At the time I was writing a book about comics for the Scholastic Press; as part of that project, I interviewed Jim Shooter and he offered me an editorial job." In addition to editing (in the course of which, he gave Frank Miller his first writing assignment), Denny also did his share of writing until, once again, Dick Giordano brought him into the DC fold, this time offering him a position as Senior Editor. As usual, his day job hasn't prevented Denny from writing, including THE QUESTION and DOC SAVAGE.

Denny also has a hefty share of credits outside the comic book field. "Well, I've done numerous book reviews for *Publisher's Weekly*, published about 18 or 19 mystery and science fiction short stories (the latest appearing in a recent issue of *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine)*, a few of which have found their way into anthologies. One was voted the best mystery story of 1975, and another, which partly turned on the issue of bigotry, was picked up for radio in South Africa. I don't approve of what's going on in South Africa, but by the time I found out about it, it was a fait accompli. I also wrote a media column for five years for Epic Magazine, which was one of the most satisfying things I've ever done. Everybody likes to mouth off about movies, but I got paid for it.

"I've also published a few books, including a martial arts novel, which was co-written with Jim Berry, a science fiction novel I'd rather forget about, and two books on comics history. There were also a couple of television scripts in there, one for the G.I. Joe TV show, and an episode of 'Logan's Run.' Not to mention a lot of lecturing at universities and colleges, mostly on the pulp tradition, culminating in the kind of super-hero thing we do."

Not one to rest on his considerable stack of laurels, Denny is currently at work on several new projects. "One of the things I'm developing is a new Batwoman mini-series, starting from scratch with the character. Based on what I've done so far, it'll probably be the grimmest thing I've ever written. This woman is going to make Job look like Pollyanna."

Denny manages to keep busy during his free time, when he can find some. "I take a lot of courses, mostly involving Asian studies, and I've been taking tai chi for five years," he says, adding hastily, "The peaceful non-martial art variety . . . just in case someone thinks to come up to me and challenge me to a fight."

Still, Denny's proudest "accomplishment" is his son, Larry, who's studying to be a film-maker, and, he tells us happily, "I recently married my childhood sweetheart, Marifran . . . who's still new enough at this to get a kick out of seeing her name in print."

Seeing his own name in print may be old hat to Denny, but despite his lengthy list of credits, it's still something his fans will look forward to seeing for a long time to come.

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES®

From the archives of the DC Comics Library, we bring you the cover of ADVENTURE COMICS #300 (1962), when the Legion became the cover feature. Look for L.E.G.I.O.N. '89 in next month's DIRECT CURRENTS . . .